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FEWTER.

THIS word is tolerably common in the romances of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. It signifies some kind of support for a spear, which was brought into use only when the knight was about to charge, serving to steady his aim, and perhaps add force to the thrust.

To him rides with his spere on fewter festened. *W. of Pal.* 3593.

A spere in fewter he foldes. *Av. Art.* xlii, 7.

A fair spere in fewtyre he castes. *M. Art.* 1366.

In fewtir thai kest scharpe speris. *Wallace*, iv, 447.

In the rowme of ane renk in fewtir kest he. *Rauf Coil-sear*, 809.

I have met with the English word nowhere but in the old romances (in which I include the *Wallace*). Chaucer does not use it, using *arest* instead (*R. R.* 7561; *K. T.* 1744).

In Old French it is common. See *Orson de Beauvais*, 3511; *Ordre de Chevalerie*, 7204; *Chev. d. l. Charette*; *Rom. de Renart* x, 734; *Froissart*, *Dit dou Florin*, 137.

Du Cange (s. v. *feltrum*) cites *lances sus fautres*, *Guiart* (A. D. 1214) and one or two other romances, and *fautre* or *feltre* seems to be the old French form. If the etymology from *feltrum* (and not from *fulcrum*) be correct, it must have been a felt-lined socket, and the change from that term to *arest* or *rest* would seem to imply a change in the article itself.

Now we know pretty well, from contemporary drawings, the shape and mode of holding the lance. In the twelfth century it seems to have had a plain smooth shaft; but in the thirteenth we find the shaft swelling out above the gripe, so as to give a firmer hold. In the fifteenth we find the *vamplate*, a flaring disk of metal, fastened on the shaft just above the gripe. The lance was held under the arm, and gripped with the hand close to the body, the butt standing out clear behind. Now when the vamplate was used, it was brought against the knight's cuirass; but before its use, some contrivance was necessary to confirm the lance, as the mere gripe of hand and arm could not withstand the impact of the charge. Hence the *fewter*, and then the *arest* or *rest*.

The *arest* was a metallic projection from the right side of the breast-plate (as we may see in Meyrick's *Antient Armour*) which supported

the lance in some way. The *fewter*, if a socket, must have received the butt of the lance, and the question is, how was it attached, and where? The *Oxford Dictionary* defines it, "the rest or support for a lance . . . attached to the saddle of a knight." That it could have been attached solidly to the saddle seems impossible, for the illustrations show the lance held well above the saddle, and the butt standing out free behind. It might possibly have been attached to the saddle or the cuirass by a chain or thong, and slipped over the butt before charging. Meyrick gives no help, for he supposes (in Glossary) the *fautre* to have been some kind of "armour for the thighs," a notion which his very citations show to be absurd. Godefroy (s. v. *fautre*) defines it: "arrêt fixé au plastron de fer pour recevoir le bois de la lance;" and I incline to this definition.

I have written this probably too long note, in the hope that it may catch the eye of some one who can explain exactly what the *fewter* was, and how it was used.

WM. HAND BROWNE.

Johns Hopkins University.

DID HROTSWITHA IMITATE TERENCE?

THE generally accepted opinion about the dramatic work of Hrotswitha is well phrased by a recent writer on the beginnings of our dramatic literature. This writer speaks of Hrotswitha as

"turning the unholy leaves of Terence with one hand, while she kept the other on her beads, assimilating so much of his style and phraseology as to enable her to produce a few comedies after the external likeness of his own."

Her comedies are "plays written from an open Terence." Are these plays of Hrotswitha written after the models Terence furnished? Is there any such imitation on Hrotswitha's part as the historians of our early literature assert?

χρίστος πάσχων, a Greek play of perhaps the twelfth century, professedly in imitation of Euripides, is still extant. A recent editor has made out a long list of passages and phrases which the unknown author of the play borrowed from various Greek dramatists, and